

CHAPTER III

"NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS"

AT no time had it been Phil Kendrick's habit to entertain an inflated opinion of his own importance. On occasion he had ridden around the gridiron on the shoulders of idolatrous students; but his modesty had been one of the factors underlying his popularity. Despising conceit in others, he was too prone, perhaps, to take himself to task for those little mistakes which every young man is liable to make from time to time.

It is safe to say, however, that never in all his life had he arraigned himself upon the carpet of his own condemnation so severely as now while paddling across the bay for the second time within the hour. If the McCorquodale incident earlier in the evening had lowered his opinion of his own judgment he was now ready to concede that he had no judgment whatsoever. It was of little use to tell himself that it served her right, or that she had dared him deliberately to do what he had done. That did not alter the fact that if he ever met her again—it was not likely that he would, of course, but if he did,—somewhere, sometime—he had erected a barrier to her good will which would preclude all hope of her friendship. His status in her sight was that of a "miserable fresh Aleck!"